

NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Nutrition Issues and Adolescents

Grade Levels: 9-12

Concept: Eating Disorders

Comprehensive Standard: 6.2 Evaluate the nutritional needs of individual and families in relation to health and wellness across the lifespan

Technical Standard: 6.2.3 Assess the impact of food and fad diets, eating habits, and eating disorders on wellness

LESSON COMPETENCIES:

- ? Define eating disorders
- ? Identify the warning signs of eating disorders
- ? Demonstrate strategies for communicating with those suffering from an eating disorder
- ? Explore the impact of eating disorders on health

Anticipated Behavioral Outcomes:

- ? Students choose foods from the food guide pyramid as a part of healthy weight management.
- ? Students recognize the warning signs eating disorders and take action when they suspect a peer has an eating disorder.

Resources Needed:

- Copies of all handouts for students
- Copy of transparency master
- Internet Access for all students

References for teachers and students:

An *Eating Disorders Awareness Website* is an excellent site developed by adolescents for adolescents. It has a wealth of well-researched and documented information on body image, healthy eating and eating disorders. It is available at <http://library.thinkquest.org/27755/>

The *Something Fishy Website on Eating Disorders* at www.something-fishy.org

A lesson plan, *Dying to Be Thin*, that corresponds with a New York Times article on bone damage and anorexia can be found at the following website: www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20001121tuesday.html

You can view several segments of a Public Broadcasting System series on eating disorders called *Dying to Be Thin* at www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/thin. This site also includes lesson ideas to accompany the video segments. You must have either Quick Time or Real Player software to view these videos.

A booklet on Eating Disorders is available from the National Institute of Health. It is available online at www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/eatingdisorder.cfm

A wealth of information related to eating disorders and body image is available at the following website: http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/p.asp?WebPage_ID=337

Another excellent website with information on eating disorders and treatment is ANRED: Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders, Inc. at www.anred.com

The Dairy Council of California also has a lesson plan, handouts and resources on body image at www.dairycouncilofca.org/edu/edu_prog_body2.htm

The Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute includes background information, resources and lesson ideas called *Eating Disorders and Adolescents: Conflict of Self-Image* at www.cis.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1984/5/84.05.05.x.html However, this was written in 1984 so use with caution.

A WebQuest on Eating Disorders developed by a family and consumer sciences teacher can be found at <http://coe.west.asu.edu/students/jklein/eatingdisorderwq.html> Be sure to check all Internet links before using.

Background Information:

Definitions:

Eating Disorder – a psychiatric illness with specific criteria

Disordered Eating – refers to troublesome eating behaviors, such as restrictive dieting, bingeing or purging, which occur less frequently or are less severe than those required to meet the full criteria diagnosis for an eating disorder.

According to the American Psychiatric Association , a person diagnosed as bulimic or anorectic must have all of the disorder's specific symptoms:

Anorexia Nervosa

- refusal to maintain weight that's over the lowest weight considered normal for age and height
- intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat, even though underweight
- distorted body image
- in women, three consecutive missed menstrual periods without pregnancy

Bulimia Nervosa

- recurrent episodes of binge eating (minimum average of 2 binge-eating episodes a week for at least three months)
- a feeling of lack of control over eating during the binges
- regular use of one or more of the following to prevent weight gain: self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives or diuretics, strict dieting or fasting, or vigorous exercise
- persistent over-concern with body shape and weight

Eating is influenced by many factors, including appetite, food availability, family, peer and cultural practices and attempts at voluntary control. Eating disorders involve serious disturbances in eating behavior, such as extreme and unhealthy reduction of food intake or severe overeating, as well as feelings of distress or extreme concern about body shape or weight. (National Institute of Health)

Eating disorders are **not** due to a failure of will or behavior, they are treatable medical illnesses in which certain maladaptive patterns of eating take on a will of their own. (National Institute of Health)

According to the American Dietetics Association (1998), more than 5 million Americans suffer from eating disorders. Five percent of females and 1% of males have

anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa or binge eating disorder. It is estimated that 85% of eating disorders have their onset during the adolescence.

Learning Activities:

Middle School Level

- ? KWL Chart – Ask students to complete the KWL chart on Eating Disorder to determine what students already know, what misinformation is found on their charts and what they would like to know about eating disorders. Discuss the charts with students after they have been completed. Students should complete only the “K” and “W” columns at the beginning of this area of study. After completing all class activities, ask the students to complete the “L” column.
- ? Complete the *The Eating Disorders Subject Sampler*
NOTE TO TEACHER: You may want to divide the class into groups with each group completing the questions for one issue. Each group could then report back to the class with their answers. Discuss findings with students.
- ? Invite a health professional as a guest speaker to discuss eating disorders and answer students’ questions.

High School Level

- ? Using the overhead transparency, *Truth or Myth*, ask students to identify each statement about eating disorders as a truth or myth. Discuss misconceptions related to eating disorders by providing information to dispute the myths. This information is found on the answer key for this activity.
- ? Students complete a research project on an eating disorder topic of their choice; guidelines for this project are included. Students present their reports as illustrated talks following guidelines for the FCCLA Illustrated Talk STAR event.
- ? Ask students to complete the assignment, *A Friend in Need* to assist them in communicating with friends/peers who may suffer from an eating disorder
- ? The WebQuest on Eating Disorders (see references) could be used as an alternative to the above activities.

Extended Activities:

*** Debate the topic “Should Insurance Companies Cover the Cost of Treatment for Eating Disorders” OR Develop a position paper/op ed article** presenting a case as to why insurance companies should fund treatment for eating disorders. Publish your papers in the school and/or local community newspaper.

*** Eating Healthy Awareness Day** – Host a school-wide event with speakers, booths and activities on healthy weight management, eating disorders, nutritious snacking, body image and healthy weight loss.